

CANADA

House of Commons Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

Thursday, January 17, 1935

SIXTH SESSION—SEVENTEENTH
PARLIAMENT—OPENING

The parliament which had been prorogued from time to time to the 17th day of January, 1935, met this day at Ottawa, for the dispatch of business.

The house met at three o'clock.

Arthur Beaudesne, Esquire, M.A., K.C., C.M.G., the Clerk of the House, read to the house a letter from the Governor General's secretary informing him that the Chief Justice of Canada, in his capacity as Deputy Governor General, would proceed to the Senate chamber on Thursday, the 17th of January, at 3 p.m., to open the session.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

RESIGNATION OF MR. GEORGE BLACK AND ELECTION
OF MR. JAMES LANGSTAFF BOWMAN

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Prime Minister): It is my unpleasant duty to announce to this house that the Honourable George Black, our Speaker, has resigned by writing dated the 15th January, 1935, as follows:

Sir:

I find it necessary to ask the House of Commons to allow me to retire from the chair.

In laying down the great office to which the House of Commons has called me, I trust that I can hand down its traditions unimpaired. If I have been able to discharge my official duties with any degree of success, it is because I have received the help and support of all my colleagues, for which I desire to express my sincere thanks.

Yours sincerely,
George Black.

I of course am not permitted by the rules of the house to address my remarks to any official, for as members of the House of Commons we all stand on an equality. It will therefore be necessary for us to proceed with the election of a speaker, which we shall do in due course after the formalities which have obtained through the centuries have been complied with.

A message was delivered by Major A. R. Thompson, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:

Members of the House of Commons:

His Honour, the Deputy of His Excellency the Governor General, desires the immediate attendance of this honourable house in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly the house went up to the Senate chamber, when the Speaker of the Senate said:

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

I have it in command to let you know that His Excellency the Governor General does not see fit to declare the causes of his summoning the present Parliament of Canada, until the Speaker of the House of Commons shall have been chosen according to law, but this afternoon, at the hour of three-thirty o'clock in the afternoon, His Excellency will declare the causes of calling this parliament.

And the Members being returned to the Commons Chamber:

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Prime Minister): Mr. Beaudesne, the unfortunate circumstance to which I have already alluded renders it necessary that this Commons House of Parliament should proceed with the election of a Speaker.

I therefore, propose, seconded by Mr. Guthrie:

That, James Langstaff Bowman, member representing the electoral district of Dauphin, do take the Chair of this House as Speaker.

I need hardly remind hon. members that the office of presiding officer of this House of Commons is one of the greatest importance. It involves the discharge of great responsibilities, holding the scales of justice even between contending parties, and the administration of the rules of the house in a manner that accords with the traditions and customs of parliament. It is not difficult to maintain order in the House of Commons—it should not be. That portion of the duties of a Speaker is easy to discharge. But the administration of the rules, which are nothing more than the means by which the members of parliament have